

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 00301 041910Z

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ACTION SCI-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 AEC-11 AECE-00 ACDA-19 CIAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5859

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ROME

EC BRUSSELS 9112

UNCLAS PARIS 0301

FOR SCI

DEPT. PASS AEC

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TGEN,

SUBJECT: COMMERCIAL FAST BREEDER REACTOR

REF.: PARIS 31946

1. IT WAS REPORTED TODAY THAT ON DECEMBER 28 FRENCH, GERMAN, AND ITALIAN UTILITIES SIGNED AN AGREEMENT TO BUILD TWO COMMERCIAL SIZE FAST BREEDER NUCLEAR REACTOR POWER STATIONS. THE FIRST OF THESE 1200 MEGAWATT STATIONS WILL BE CONSTRUCTED IN MALVILLE, FRANCE. IT WILL USE FRENCH FAST BREEDER TECHNOLOGY BASED ON THE 250-MEGAWATT PROTOTYPE PHENIX REACTOR WHICH HAS JUST BEEN CONNECTED TO THE NATIONAL GRID (REF A). THE FRENCH HOPE TO COMPLETE THE "SUPER-PHENIX" IN 1979. EDF OF FRANCE WILL CONTRIBUTE 51 PER CENT OF COSTS, ENEL OF ITALY 33 PER CENT, AND RWE OF GERMANY 16 PER CENT. THE SECOND FAST BREEDER STATION WILL BE BUILT IN GERMANY PROBABLY USING GERMAN FAST BREEDER TECHNOLOGY. THE COST BREAKDOWN FOR THE SECOND BREEDER WILL BE 51 PER CENT RWE, UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 PARIS 00301 041910Z

33 PERCENT ENEL, AND 16 PER CENT EDF.

2. THE THREE PARTNERS HAD SIGNED A DECLARATION OF INTENTION IN JULY 1971. REPORTEDLY, THERE WAS SOME DELAY IN SIGNING CONTRACT OWING TO SLOWNESS OF ITALIAN GOVERNMENT TO APPROVE ITALIAN PARTICIPATION. THE NEXT STEP, STATES PARIS DAILY LE FIGARO, IS TO ESTABLISH A FIRM, TO BE CALLED NERSA.

3. COMMENT: RATHER THAN BREAK NEW GROUND, THE TRILATERAL ACCORD RATIFIES A COOPERATIVE PROJECT ALREADY IN PROGRESS. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE THE SUPERPHENIX WOULD BE THE FIRST COMMERCIAL FAST BREEDER POWER REACTOR. ITS DEVELOPMENT, HOWEVER, DEPENDS ON THE SATISFACTORY OPERATION OF THE PROTOTYPE PHENIX REACTOR WHICH IS NOW IN SLOW PROCESS OF BEING BROUGHT UP TO NORMAL OPERATING POWER.STONE

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